



## Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)

An outbreak spread of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) has been reported; it is caused by a new species of corona virus first encountered in the Arabian Peninsula and neighboring countries in March 2012. This outbreak is similar to severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) responsible for an epidemic in 2002 -2003.

Incubation period	The incubation period lasts from several days up to two weeks.
Symptoms	The typical symptoms are fever, cough, and shortness of breath which may cause pneumonia, and rapidly develop into worsened respiratory status. There are no typical symptoms for definitive diagnosis, because there are diverse symptoms in cases ranging from mild to severe. Gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting and diarrhea may also occur.
Route of infection	The route of infection is not well understood. Similar to other corona viruses, it may be transmitted by airborne droplets and person-to-person contact. Secondary infections from patients to medical professionals and other patients have been reported in overseas a medical institution lacking infection precaution.
Treatment	Unfortunately, there is no specific medicine. Symptomatic treatment is typically performed, treatment and respiratory care are performed in accordance with presenting symptoms.
Prevention	Unfortunately, no vaccine is currently available. It is most important to wash your hands thoroughly. Alcohol gel can also be used if hand washing is not possible. Although the benefit of masks is unknown, it may prevent virus spread by preventing hands from contacting the mouth and nose. It is better to refrain from unnecessary travel to countries affected by the outbreak. When entering Japan after visiting outbreak countries, the recommended health-monitoring period is approximately two weeks, incubation period. If symptoms appear during the period, please do the following your physical condition and body temperature. Infection can be ruled out if there are no changes in physical condition after two weeks of entering.

**If you have a fever of 38°C or higher, cough, shortness of breath, or gastrointestinal symptoms appear within two weeks of returning from countries affected by the outbreak. Please refrain from visiting a medical institution, immediately call the nearest public health center “HOKENJYO”, and follow their instructions.**

\* The mortality rate of MERS may be as high as 30-50%, which is 10 times greater than SARS, however, person-to-person transmission appears to be limited.

